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DEAN, NEW JERSEY DELEGATION

Statement Supporting H.R. 3655, “to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1300 Main Street in Belmar, New Jersey, as the ‘Dr. Walter S. McAfee Post Office Building’”

Representative Christopher H. Smith
December 12, 2017

Thank you, Mister Speaker,

It is an honor for me to bring H.R.3655 before the House today, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 1300 Main Street in Belmar, New Jersey, as the "Dr. Walter S. McAfee Post Office Building."

Dr. Walter McAfee was a scientist, educator, and adviser to the U.S. Army Communication-Electronics Command and the Fort Monmouth community.

Mr. Speaker, I reached out to leaders of Information Age Learning Center (also known as InfoAge) and asked them if they could recommend a member of the community whom they believed ought to be honored in this way, and they recommended Dr. McAfee. InfoAge has been the leading organization preserving scientific history, innovation, and communications located at the former U.S. Army Camp Evans sub-post of Fort Monmouth and their insights and recommendation was key.

Dr. McAfee was instrumental in the success of Project Diana, an effort by scientists at Camp Evans to pierce the earth's outer atmosphere with high frequency radio signals (radar). It was his mathematical calculations that enabled the team to bounce the first radio signals off the moon's surface. Without the success of his calculations that allowed for communications to occur between earth and space, the achievements of launching a satellite into space, or sending a man to the moon, would not have been possible. It is the achievement of this extraordinary man that actually helped launch us into the space age.

During his time at Fort Monmouth, Dr. McAfee also developed sensors which were used to detect and track enemy movements during the Vietnam War, and served as director of a NATO study on surveillance and target acquisition, high-priority technologies during the cold-war.

Dr. McAfee was the first African-American to be promoted to GS-16, a "super-grade" civilian position in the U.S. Army Materiel Command (AMC) and to be inducted into the AMC Hall of Fame. Throughout his lifetime, his achievements were recognized through the dozens of awards and honors he received for his contributions to science and to the defense of the U.S. and our allies.

He was known for his love of learning, high ethical standards, and good sense of humor.

Dr. McAfee passed away in 1995 in Belmar, New Jersey. He and his wife, Viola, were married for close to 54 years and are survived by their daughters Diane Mercedes McAfee and Marsha Bera-Morris.

Thank you and I yield back.